

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are requested.

In the Final Rejection mailed November 16, 2004, claims 13 and 16 were objected to because these claims include the recitation of "a projection extending from said end wall of said recess". This objection is not readily understood, and the scope of claims 13 and 16 is believed to be clear to one having ordinary skill in the art. In this regard, claims 13 and 16 require that the first engagement portion comprises an end wall of a recess, and that the second engagement portion comprises a projection extending from the end wall. Please see Fig. 6A, wherein the first engagement portion is the end wall of recess 57, and the second engagement portion is the projection extending from the end wall of this recess. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to claims 13 and 16 should not be maintained.

Also in the Final Rejection, claims 6-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed and Suzuki et al. is not applicable with regard to the currently pending claims for the following reasons.

In finding claim 6 to be anticipated by Suzuki et al. the Examiner equated the gear mechanism 43 of Suzuki patent to the claimed rotation blocking mechanism. As stated by the Examiner, because the gear mechanism 43 does not freely move when not actuated by force of motor 18, the gear mechanism 43 might act to block rotation of associated cam member 20 when the motor is not in an operational mode. However, the gear mechanism 43 is moved when the motor 18 is activated due to a malfunction, and therefore the gear mechanism 43 can no longer block rotation of the cam member 20 under such a condition.

In contrast to the gear mechanism 43 of Suzuki et al., the rotation blocking mechanism as now recited in amended claim 6 can block the cam member from rotating in a direction that would cause the lock bolt to move from the retreat position to the protruding position, **even if the electric motor is activated due to a malfunction**. Accordingly, the gear mechanism 43 of Suzuki et al. is

completely different from the rotation blocking mechanism as now recited in claim 6. Thus, for this reason claim 6 is not anticipated by Suzuki et al., whereby claims 6-26 are allowable.

Additionally, as explained above, the steering lock apparatus of Suzuki et al. does not have elements corresponding to the rotation blocking mechanism of claim 6, and accordingly, Suzuki et al. does not have the holding portion as now recited in claim 6, which holding portion is for holding the rotation blocking mechanism in a state that rotation of the cam member is blocked when the lock bolt is at the retreat position.

In finding claim 6 to be anticipated by Suzuki et al., the Examiner equated step portion 33b of driven body 21 to the claimed holding portion. However, the step portion 33b is a portion only for stopping rotation of the driven body 21 via an elastic bump against damper member 35 when lock member 13 has reached a protrusion position, and this step portion does not have a function of holding the driven body 21 (i.e., the cam member 20) at a stopped rotational position in which the lock member 13 is at the protrusion position. Also, step portion 33a of the driven body 21 is a portion only for stopping rotation of the driven body 21 via an elastic bump against the damper member 35 when the lock member 13 has reached a retreat position, and this step portion does not have a function of holding the driven body 21 (i.e. the cam member 20) at a stopped rotational position in which the lock member 13 is at the retreat position.

In contrast to the step portions 33a, 33b of the driven body 21 of Suzuki et al., the holding portion as recited in claim 6 can hold the rotation blocking mechanism in a state in which rotation of the cam member is blocked when the lock bolt is at the retreat position. Accordingly, the step portions 33a, 33b of Suzuki patent are completely different from the holding portion of claim 6. Thus, for this additional reason claim 6 is not anticipated by Suzuki et al., whereby claims 6-26 are allowable.

Furthermore, new claim 26 is believed to be patentable in its own right. In this regard, claim 26 requires that the holding portion comprises a second engagement portion of the cam member, which second engagement portion is to engage with the rotation blocking mechanism and block the rotation blocking mechanism from moving in a direction that would release engagement between the rotation blocking mechanism and the first engagement portion of the cam member. Such a

second engagement portion is not disclosed by Suzuki et al., whereby claim 26 is patentable in its own right.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner believes that any issues remain which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative by telephone to resolve such issues.

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